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## Discoverer of brain stem cells becomes president of ISSCR

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The North County Times had a good story yesterday about Fred Gage's new role as the president of the International Society for Stem Cell Research. Gage is a renowned stem cell scientists at The Salk Institute for Biological Studies, which also wrote about his new role.

Gage was the first to show that people do, in fact, produce new brain cells after birth. In work that is especially close to my heart, he also showed that mice that get (to quote the 1999 press release) "regular voluntary exercise on running wheels" also grow more brain cells than sedentary mice.

More recently, Gage has had CIRM funding to carry out studies modeling human neurological diseases in a lab dish as a way of understanding and treating those diseases. We've blogged about his work [here](#) and [here](#).

As the new president of ISSCR, which represents about 4,000 stem cell scientists internationally, Gage said he hoped to advocate for stem cell science to the public and to politicians. He also hopes to advance ISSCR's mission of moving basic stem cell discoveries into clinical therapies. He told the North County Times:

“ "There's been a lot of fantastic basic research that has been done," Gage said. "We realize that part of our mission as a society is to translate these basic science into clinical applications. We call it bench to bedside. We're thinking about ways to do this most effectively."

"You have to have the basic biologists helping in this, but we need the clinicians too, even though they don't have the (scientific) knowledge," Gage said. "We need to bring them up to speed. And underlying all this, we need to have a very effective fundraising effort for the society."

Gage talked to CIRM about how stem cells can be used to mimic disease in a lab dish:

A.A.

Tags: Gage, Salk Institute, ISSCR

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